



By the King.

A Proclamation for restraint of killing, dressing, and eating of Flesh in Lent, or on Fish daies, appointed by the Law, to be hereafter strictly obserued by all sorts of people.



Whereas, for the benefit and commodity of this Our Realme of England, as well in the maintenance of Our Navy and Shipping (a principall strength of this Island) as for the sparing and increase of Flesh victuall, diuers good Lawes and Statutes haue bene prouided, for the due obseruation of Lent, and other dayes appointed for Fish dayes, which from time to time haue bene seconded and quickned by sundry Our Proclamations, and other Actes and Ordinances of State; And whereas, notwithstanding the many good prouisions heretofore had and made in that kinde, wee yet finde the inordinate liberty, now vsually taken by all sorts of people to kill, dresse, and eat Flesh in the Lent season, and on other daies and times prohibited by Law, is become an euill of such inueterate growth, as it requireth more then ordinary care to suppress the same:

wee therefore much affecting the Reformation of this so great an euill (and enemy to the plentie of Our Kingdomes) haue thought fit eftsloones (and thus timely, the better to take away the excuse, and to prevent the prouisions of Flesh that vsually men make against the Lent season) To expresse Our selfe and Our Royall Commandement in this behalfe: wherein, without any future declaration of Our pleasure in this kinde, wee shall expect and require from all Our Subjects, that due Notice be taken, and that a strict and continued obedience and conformance be yeelded thereunto in all succeeding times.

And therefore wee doe straitly Charge and Command all and euery person and persons whatsoever, to whom it may appertaine, carefully to prouide and see, that these Orders following may be duly obserued and put in execution, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such penalties, as by the Lawes of this Our Realme may be inflicted vpon the Offenders, for their contempt or neglect of Us and Our Lawes, whereof we shall shew Our selues most sensible.

And first, whereas wee finde, that the chiefe cause of these disorders hath growen from the Licences that haue bene granted to Butchers, to kill and vtter Flesh contrary to Law, And that by Our Lawes, no Mayor, Justice of Peace, or other person of what degree or qualitie soeuer, can grant any Licence in this kinde, And that the Lords and others of Our Priuy Councell, do by Our direction forbear to grant the same, or giue way thereunto; Our will and pleasure is vpon the penalties prouided by Law, and such further punishment to be inflicted vpon the offenders, as shall be thought meete, that no such Licence shall be granted for the killing or vttering of Flesh; And that no Butcher or other person whatsoever, doe by colour thereof, kill, vtter, or put to sale any Flesh contrary to the Lawes established and prouided in that behalfe.

And for the auoiding of such inconueniences hereafter, Our will and pleasure is, That the Lord Mayor of Our Citie of London, and euery other Officer and Justice of Peace, shall call before them, and send for any of the seruants of any Inholders, Victuallers, Cookes, Alehousekeepers, Tauer-ners, and keepers of Ordinary tables, and such others that vtter victuals, and to examine them vpon their corporall Oathes, what Flesh is, or hath bene, during the Lent season, or other daies prohibited by the Law, dressed, killed, vttered, or eaten in their houses, which if they shall refuse to doe, then to commit to prison the said seruants so refusing vpon their Oathes to declare the truth.

That the Lord Maior shall also yeerely before Lent, or at the beginning thereof, cause all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victuallers, Alehouse keepers, and Tauerers within the City and Liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such persons as he shall appoint meete for that purpose; And shall take Recognizances with sufficient Sureties of euery of them in good summes of money, (viz.) One hundred pounds of the Principall, and their sureties thirty pounds apiece, to Dur not to dresse any Flesh in their houses in the Lent time, or at other times prohibited, for any reason, nor suffer it to bee eaten contrary to Lawe. The like Recognizance with Sureties, shall bee taken of the like parties vpon like penalties, by the Iustices of Peace of Our City of Westminster, and Liberties thereof; and euery of the said Recognizances to be certified into Our Exchequer.

And for the Butchers, & others that come with victuall of Flesh out of the Countrey into the City, at pleasure is, That the Lord Maior shall cause certaine persons to watch at the Gates and other places in the Suburbes, where Flesh may bee brought, to view and search, and to intercept the same: And if any of those watchmen shall be found negligent and corrupt in his Charge, then he to be committed to prison during the whole Lent.

And to the end that Fishermen may imploy themselves to Sea with better encouragement then heretofore, and that the Fishmongers may furnish themselves with such store from time to time hereafter, as shall be expedient, as well for the prouision of the Citie, as for selling the same at reasonable Rates; We will that they take notice of this Our Commandement, and constant resolution for obseruance of Lent, and Fish-dayes, both now and hereafter, as by Law is required.

And furthermore, as we thinke it fit, that euery man should be a rule of order and abstinence in his house, as well in respect of the publique, as of his private ease and benefit, So we straitly charge and command all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victuallers, Alehouse keepers, and Tauerers; not to make any Supper for any person or persons whatsoeuer, vpon Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent; nor to suffer any meate to be then drested, vttered, sold or eaten in their houses, vpon paine of such punishment, as is due to those that shall contemne Our Royall pleasure and Commandement.

And forasmuch as vpon further aduice and consideration had, that the restraint of killing and dresting of flesh is no sufficient remedy for the mischiefe, vnlesse there bee better care also taken to suppress the vnlawfull and inordinate eating of flesh in the time of Lent, and on other dayes and times prohibited, wherewith Our subiects haue accustomed themselves, rather for delicacie then for necessity; is therefore Our Royall will and pleasure, and accordingly we doe hereby straitly prohibite and forbid all Our Subiects of what degree or qualitie soeuer within this Our Realme, to eat any manner of flesh in the time of Lent, or on other dayes now vsually obserued as Fish-dayes, without speciall Licence first obtained from the Bishop of the Diocesse, or such other as by the Lawe haue power to giue Licence in that behalfe, (which we will and command shall bee sparingly granted, in cases of necessitie onely) vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and to bee proceeded against by our Attourney Generall in Our Court of Starre-Chamber, as contemners of Our Royall Commandement, and vpon such further penaltie, as by the Lawes and Statutes of Our Realme may be inflicted on those that shall wilfully offend in this kinde.

And as these Orders are to be executed in Our City of London, & places neere to the same, so it is Our expresse pleasure and Commandement, That Our Iustices of Peace in all Shires within their iurisdiction, and all other Maiors, Bailiffes, and chiefe Officers in Townes corporate, or in any Liberties within their Precincts, shall cause the same to be obserued and performed in like manner; and that no manner of Toleration, Fauour, or Connivencie be vsed by any Iustice of Peace, or other Officer, contrary to the true meaning of this Our Proclamation, as both they that shall presume wittingly so to commit the offence, as also the party himselfe offending, will answer the same at their vttermost perils: Our Commandement being, That Our Lawes in this case shall be hereafter seuerely executed vpon all offenders whatsoeuer.

Further charging and commanding the Lord Maior of Our City of London, the Iustices of Assize in their seuerall Circuits, the Maiors and chiefe Officers of all other Cities and Townes corporate, Iustices of Peace, Lords of Liberties, and all other Officers and Ministers within the seuerall Counties of this Our Realme, That they and euery of them fully obey this Our pleasure, and cause and compell the same to be obeyed and executed by others, as they will answer the contrary at their vttermost perils.

And for the due execution of the Premises in all other the Counties of this Our Realme, as well in Our Cities of London and Westminster, we doe hereby straitly charge and command all our Iustices of Peace within the same Counties, as well within Liberties as without, That yeerely in euery yeere hereafter before Lent, they cause to come and appeare before them all Inholders,

Cookes, Tauerneers, Alehousekeepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers whatsoever, and to require and take of them to Our vse, severall Recognizances, with Sureties, for obseruation of the premises, (viz.) The principals in ten pounds, and their two Sureties in five pounds apiece: And if they shall refuse or neglect to enter into such Recognizances, That then the sayd Justices shall suppress such persons so refusing, from Victualling any more, and shall also cause them forthwith to become bound by Recognizance with Sureties to Our vse, (viz.) The principals in twenty pounds, and their two Sureties in ten pounds apiece, not to Victuall or sell Beere or Ale from thenceforth; which if they shall refuse to doe, then the sayd Justices to commit to prison all such persons so refusing to enter into such Recognizance, vntill they shall submit themselves, and become bound, as aforesaid. And further for all such Inholders, Cookes, Tauerneers, Alehousekeepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers as shall not appeare before the sayd Justices, as aforesaid. That they immediately send forth their warrants, or grant Processe against them and enery of them so making default, to appeare and answer their contempt at the next generall Sessions of the Peace.

And further for the more due punishment of Inholders, Keepers of ordinary Tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehousekeepers, Tauerneers, and such like, who shall forfeit their Recognizances by killing or dressing of flesh, or suffering it to be eaten in their houses in the Lent time, and other Fish-daves; And to the end that the same may be as well taken in due forme of Law, as duely certified into Our Exchequer, Wee doe will and require all Justices of Peace, as well within Liberties as without, That at such times as they shall meet within their severall Diuisions, for the taking of such Recognizances, that they giue notice to the Clerkes of the Peace, or their Deputies, to attend them for that purpose. Of whom Wee will require a strict Accompt for the Legall taking and returning of the same Recognizances into Our sayd Exchequer: The sayd Clerkes of the Peace and their Deputies, taking for the making and certifying of the same Recognizances of all Inne-keepers, Tauerneers, Cookes and Butchers, the Fee of two shillings six pence; And of all Alehousekeepers the Fee of twelue pence; as limited to be taken by the Clerke of the Peace for Our County of Middlesex for every such Recognizance, and no more.

And lastly, for that the Fishmongers (vpon the obseruation of the aforesayd Orders) may perhaps take occasion thereby to enhance the prices, as well of fresh as of Sea fish; Wee doe therefore heereby further charge and command all Fishmongers whatsoever, That they sell and utter their fish at moderate and vsuall Rates and prices: And that all Justices of Peace, Maiors, Bailiffes, and other Our Officers as well within Liberties as without, to whom it shall appertain, shall from time to time take such order with the sayd Fishmongers, that our Subjects bee not grieved by any such enhancement or encrease of prices vpon fish, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such further punishment as may be inflicted vpon them by Our Lawes.

Given at Whitehall the thirtieth day of Ianuary, in the twentieth yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Ireland.

God saue the King.

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